

CLAIMS

1. A composition for inhibiting the growth of microorganisms on non-cellulosic fibres having a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$, comprising;

- i) 1 to 50 wt% of at least a self-crosslinkable resin;
- ii) 0.25 to 20 wt% of at least a catalyst;
- iii) 0.1 to 4 wt% of at least an antimicrobial active agent, reactive with the resin;
- iv) 98.65 to 26 wt% of water;

wherein i) + ii) + iii) + iv) = 100%.

2. A composition according to claim 1 where the non-cellulosic fibres have an acid value ≤ 5 mmol/kg.

3. A composition for inhibiting the growth of microorganisms on non-cellulosic fibres having an acid value of ≤ 5 mmol/kg, comprising;

- i) 1 to 50 wt% of at least a self-crosslinkable resin;
- ii) 0.25 to 20 wt% of at least a catalyst;
- iii) 0.1 to 4 wt% of at least an antimicrobial active agent, reactive with the resin;
- iv) 98.65 to 26 wt% of water;

wherein i) + ii) + iii) + iv) = 100%.

4. A composition according to claim 3 where the non-cellulosic fibres have a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$.

5. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims where the non-cellulosic fibres are selected from the group consisting of polyester, polyamide, polypropylene, polyurethane and cellulose acetate.

6. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims where the self-crosslinkable resin is an amino resin.

7. A composition according to claim 6 where the self-crosslinkable resin is a formaldehyde condensate with urea or melamine.

8. A composition according to claim 7 where the self-crosslinkable resin is selected from dimethyloldihydroxyethylene urea and dihydroxydimethylene urea.

9. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims where the catalyst is selected from the group consisting of MgCl_2 ; ammonium chloride; ammonium sulphate; ammonium salts of formic acid, boric acid, phosphoric acid, oxalic acid; poly(hexamethylene biguanide) hydrochloride and or mixtures thereof.

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10. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 8 where the catalyst is selected from the group consisting of MgCl_2 ; ammonium chloride; ammonium sulphate; ammonium salts of formic acid, boric acid, phosphoric acid, oxalic acid; and or mixtures thereof.

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11. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 9 where the catalyst is poly(hexamethylene biguanide) hydrochloride.

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12. A composition according to any one of the preceding claims where the antimicrobial active agent is selected from the group consisting of quaternary ammonium salts, biguanides, monoguanides, and or mixtures thereof.

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13. A method for inhibiting the growth of microorganisms on non-cellulosic fibres having a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$, comprising stages:
A) contacting the fibres with a composition according to any one of the preceding claims;
B) optionally drying the fibres contacted with the composition; and
C) curing the fibres contacted with the composition to effect crosslinking of the resin.

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14. A method according to claim 13 where the non-cellulosic fibres have an acid value of $\leq 5 \text{ mmol/kg}$.

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15. A method for inhibiting the growth of microorganisms on non-cellulosic fibres having an acid value of $\leq 5 \text{ mmol/kg}$, comprising stages:
A) contacting the fibres with a composition according to any one of the preceding claims;
B) optionally drying the fibres contacted with the composition; and
C) curing the fibres contacted with the composition to effect crosslinking of the resin.

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16. A method according to claim 15 where the non-cellulosic fibres have a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$.

17. A method according to any one of claims 13 to 16 where stage C) is carried out at temperatures in the range of from 100 to 180°C.

18. A method according to any one of claims 13 to 17 where stage C) is carried out for a time in the range of from 30 seconds to 5 minutes.

19. Non-cellulosic fibres having a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$ carrying a composition comprising:

(a) 1 to 10 wt% by weight of the non-cellulosic fibres of at least a self-crosslinkable resin; and

5 (b) 0.1 to 1 wt% by weight of the non-cellulosic fibres of at least an antimicrobial active agent, reacted with the resin.

20. Non-cellulosic fibres according to claim 19 having an acid value of ≤ 5 mmol/kg.

10 21. Non-cellulosic fibres having an acid value of ≤ 5 mmol/kg carrying a composition comprising:

(a) 1 to 10 wt% by weight of the non-cellulosic fibres of at least a self-crosslinkable resin; and

15 (b) 0.1 to 1 wt% by weight of the non-cellulosic fibres of at least an antimicrobial active agent, reacted with the resin.

22. Non-cellulosic fibres according to claim 21 having a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$.

20 23. Non-cellulosic fibres having a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$ treated with a composition according to any one of claims 1 to 11.

24. Non-cellulosic fibres having an acid value of $\leq 5\%$ mmol/kg treated with a composition according to any one of claims 1 to 11.

25 25. Use of a composition according to any one of claims 1 to 11 in the treatment of non-cellulosic fibres having a moisture regain of $\leq 5\%$.

26. Use of a composition according to any one of claims 1 to 11 in the treatment of non-cellulosic fibres having an acid value of ≤ 5 mmol/kg.